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ABSTRACT

This document outlines a vision for adult and community education (ACE) in Victoria for the next 3 years and provides a broad map of how to reach that vision. A description of the context is followed by the ACE vision statement: ACE delivers accessible, quality, and timely learning in autonomous, community settings as a valued and essential partner in Victoria's post-compulsory education and training system. Ace values and learning goals are then listed. Future challenges and opportunities are highlighted in these areas: globalization, localization, knowledge economy, enterprising education, educational values, learning partnerships, and imaginative learning. A final section focuses on strategic directions that address both potential futures for ACE and more immediate and emerging challenges and opportunities for the ACE sector. The following are strategic directions: build communities through ACE; build ACE resources and learning infrastructure; strengthen strategic relationships within and beyond ACE; and build knowledge and promote recognition of ACE. Information provided for each strategic direction includes purpose, strategic approaches summary, list and description of strategic approaches, and related themes. (YLB)

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ACE into the 21st Century

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foreword

The ACFE Board document ***ACE into the 21st Century*** *is more than a plan, it is, as the name suggests, a vision for ACE in Victoria for the next three years and a broad map of how to reach that vision.*

The ACFE Board vision has been developed through a highly consultative process. It has been informed by a detailed scenario planning approach which drew on the thinking of some of Australia's pre-eminent planners as well as major stakeholders in the ACE sector. The collective analysis has explored the trends and drivers shaping the world which ACE is likely to encounter over the next five to ten years.

This ACFE Board vision is a thoughtful expression of the place ACE can occupy in the post compulsory education and training landscape and the strategic approaches required to reach its goals.

I believe that ***ACE into the 21st Century*** *does provide the framework which will allow ACE to realise its aspirations as a unique educational sector over the coming three years.*

It is with great pleasure that I endorse the ACFE Board vision, ***ACE into the 21st Century.***

Lynne Kosky MP
Minister for Post Compulsory Education, Training and Employment

context

Community Ownership of the ACE Sector

Community owned and managed adult education has developed as an educational sector in Victoria since 1960. The sector is a partnership between government and the community which was formalised in the Adult, Community and Further Education Act 1991. The ACFE Board and ACFE Regional Councils were established under the Act in 1992. The adult community education (ACE) sector is a distinct educational sector in Victoria, the defining quality of which is its community ownership and management. The sector comprises over five hundred providers of community owned and managed adult education. Adult Community and Further Education describes the broad range of programs undertaken by ACE providers, TAFE Institutes, Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES) and the Centre for Adult Education (CAE). This work is undertaken within the framework of the ACFE Board's vision and the vision of the State Training Board and its successor, the Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission.

The ACFE Program

Adult community and further education is a responsibility which the ACFE Board shares with the State Training Board (and expects to share with the Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission). Together these two statutory bodies are required by legislation to prepare sequential and complementary three year plans for the development of ACFE in Victoria. Together these plans are the framework for development of the ACFE Program: general education for adults, adult literacy and basic education, preparatory education, the VCE for adults, English as a second language and vocational education where it is delivered by an ACE organisation. The strategic directions of both statutory bodies provide the framework for the development of plans for further education over the next three years. The ACFE vision, ***ACE into the 21st Century*** also provides the framework for the development of the plans of the nine Regional Councils of ACFE.

Government Initiatives

This fourth ACFE Board vision has been developed in an environment characterised by dramatic change at both the level of post compulsory education and training in Victoria and at national and global levels. Legislation to amend the ACFE Act 1991, to create AMES and CAE as new adult education institutions, has passed through the Victorian Parliament. The landmark Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education, Training and Employment Pathways (2000) (The Kirby Report) will significantly recast post compulsory education and training in Victoria over the coming three years. Initiatives introduced by the Bracks Government have created Learning Towns and ACE Clusters. These place ACE at the centre of exciting new educational enterprises and will help build partnerships in the ACE sector. The world of post compulsory education and training in Victoria is dynamic.

Key Themes of the First Decade of the 21st Century

In recognition of the pace of change in the environment in which it operates, the ACFE Board has developed its vision for 2001-2003 in the context of a five to ten year outlook. The future themes explored by the ACFE Board in the development of its vision were globalisation, localisation, the knowledge economy, enterprising education, educational values, learning partnerships and imaginative learning. The themes have found expression in the strategic directions contained in this plan.

Role of the ACFE Division and Regional Councils of ACFE

The Adult Community and Further Education Division of the Department of Education, Employment and Training and Regional Councils of ACFE support the ACFE Board to ensure the effective integration of ACFE programs across post compulsory education and training. The Division and Regional Councils share with the ACFE Board the responsibility for the implementation of its Mission.

ACE vision

ACE delivers accessible, quality and timely learning in autonomous, community settings as a valued and essential partner in Victoria's post compulsory education and training system.

ACE values

ACE has education at its core
Adult community education values and encourages the acquisition of knowledge and learning for personal growth and training and further education for the contribution these make to all aspects of life – work, community and culture.

ACE is learner centred
ACE teaching is adaptive to personal needs and is innovative and enterprising. It values the development of imagination and critical and emotional intelligence.

ACE is community based and driven
ACE organisations value and promote diversity and inclusiveness. They promote the connections between learners and their communities. ACE is based in the community, and is responsive to community needs. It is democratic in nature, and promotes trust and cooperation as values which build social capital.

ACE values innovation and meets the challenges of change
ACE recognises the future is about dramatic and growing change. ACE providers reduce disconnection and exclusion and enhance individual and community capacity for renewal and reinvention. ACE empowers learners and communities through imaginative learning delivery; innovative, enterprising solutions; and cooperative partnership building.

ACFE Board mission

To enhance and extend the capacity of ACE to create empowered, imaginative learners; to build democratic learning communities; and to open learning to adults who have yet to realise their power as learners.

ACE learning goals

Building on the vision and values, ACE supports learners to:

Combine a broad general education, which incorporates learning to learn, with specialised knowledge and skills ***(Learning to know)***

Develop the capacities needed to undertake work and active citizenship ***(Learning to do)***

Develop independent and interdependent learning proficiency and emotional intelligence ***(Learning to live)***

Develop responsibility for extending their potential and capacity to act with autonomy, judgement, responsibility and critical intelligence ***(Learning to be)***

future

challenges and opportunities

The drivers of change confronting our community over the next five to ten years will begin to operate on ACE during the life of this three year plan. Social, economic and environmental changes will translate into challenges for the sector and the Board. The values, strengths and recognition of ACE will provide opportunities to meet these challenges and move forward over the next three years. The ACE sector knows that the challenges of globalisation, localisation, the knowledge economy, educational enterprise and values, the creation of learning partnerships and the application of imagination to learning are important considerations. The way in which these and other more immediate challenges are addressed will determine the capacity of the sector to achieve its vision.

globalisation

Challenges

Respond to increasing disparities in wealth and access to knowledge.
Respond to competition from new markets.
Address challenges posed by social exclusion.

Opportunities

Promote access to global information and learning.
Take advantage of the revaluing of local communities as a response to globalisation.
Re-educate learners for niche, global labour markets.

localisation

Challenges

Respond to new demands from non-traditional ACE learners.
Support communities to deal with increasing demand for self-reliance and independence.
Support vulnerable communities lacking skills, knowledge and resourcefulness.
Avoid parochialism which limits bridging ties to wider communities.
Respond to the needs of an ageing Australian population.

Opportunities

Optimise ACE's community-based and connected position.
Build social capital at the local level.
Support and contribute to timely learning from youth to older adulthood.
Network and build local partnerships.
Increase innovation, flexibility and community enterprise.
Draw on local networks to boost volunteerism.

knowledge economy

Challenges

Respond to occupational and industrial changes and increasing part-time and casual work.
Meet new demand from non-traditional learners seeking meaningful educational experiences.
Retain quality teachers for whom demand may intensify as supply decreases.

Opportunities

Provide multiple learning opportunities for increasing numbers of self-employed and portfolio employed learners.
Use connected techological learning infrastructure to overcome limitations in other infrastructure.
Develop programs for those whose educational levels make their employment precarious.
Meet demand for multiple literacies.

enterprising education

Challenges

Balance brand recognition which is acceptable to ACE providers with local diversity and autonomy.
Balance creation of enterprise models with needs of learners who cannot afford to pay.
Balance enterprise with community development.
Generate enterprise in an environment of fiscal restraint.

Opportunities

Promote distinguishing qualities of ACE.
Harness ACE innovation to create new learning and delivery models.
Enhance the enterprising capacity of ACE providers.

educational values

Challenges

Compete for limited resources in an environment of continued emphasis on younger learners.
Extend the ACE values responsible for social capital generation to other educational sectors.
Respond to diverse learning demands and learning needs.

Opportunities

Harness community support for responsive and timely learning .
Optimise governments' recognition of the connection between education and training participation and robust economies and societies.
Activate renewed commitment to citizenship and civic values.
Build on the strong values which are widely embraced by the sector to reinforce the ACE brand.
Harness renewed recognition of the value of cooperation and community building to underline the contribution of ACE to social capital generation.

learning partnerships

Challenges

Create and foster constructive and equitable partnerships.
Position ACE in the context of new statutory and administrative structures.
Connect with learners currently outside of ACE.
Identify performance measurement of sufficient flexibility to encompass cross-sectoral partnership.

Opportunities

Realise learning pathways in and out of ACE.
Build on ACE Clusters and Learning Towns.
Support public policy commitments to more seamless education and training arrangements.

imaginative learning

Challenges

Remove barriers limiting teacher access to innovative practice.
Respond to the impact of prior negative learning experiences on students' ability to learn.
Respond to learner demand for timely, faster and more accessible learning.

Opportunities

Use ACE's learner centred approach to work successfully with disadvantaged learners.
Support environments which encourage high quality and committed teachers and committees of management.
Embrace online learning as one primary means of provision.

strategic directions

The Strategic Directions below address both potential futures for ACE and more immediate and emerging challenges and opportunities for the ACE sector. The directions have been developed and tested with major stakeholders in the ACE community. To achieve its Mission, the ACFE Board will commit itself to:

1. *Build communities through ACE*
2. *Build ACE resources and learning infrastructure*
3. *Strengthen strategic relationships within and beyond ACE*
4. *Build knowledge and promote recognition of ACE*

overview of the approaches

The strategic directions will be activated through diverse strategic approaches.

(1) build communities through ACE

Local needs analysis
Social capital development
Support diverse community and delivery models
Support local leadership
Support local ownership/management
Meet statewide accountabilities
Foster democracy and citizenship
Professional development for committees of management
Develop volunteer resources
Learner centred community delivery

(2) build ACE resources and learning infrastructure

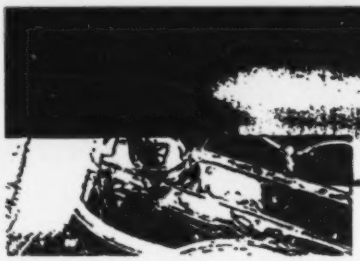
Build and diversify resource base
Strengthen local level pathways
Support information technology and new learning technologies infrastructure
Strengthen administrative and support systems
Strengthen communication infrastructure
Continuous improvement of policy
Strengthen professional development for teachers
Maintain and develop further education curriculum and resources
Apply quality assurance to delivery

(3) strengthen strategic relationships within and beyond ACE

Strategic positioning in response to "Kirby Review"
Develop cross-sectoral relationships
Optimise regional structures
Reinforce learner centred approach
Build strong relationships between Adult Education Institutes and ACFE Board and ACE providers
Develop strategic thinking
Balance competing demands and markets

(4) build knowledge and promote recognition of ACE

Statewide needs analysis
Research and evaluation
Build identity and recognition
Marketing and promotion
Advocacy
Intellectual property



build communities through ACE

purpose

Community is the C in ACE and is central to ACE activity. It is what makes ACE a distinct educational sector and its teaching powerful. ACE communities comprise learners, teachers, coordinators, volunteers and committees of management. The vigour and health of ACE depends on the power of its communities to deliver transformational educational experiences. The ACFE Board recognises its responsibility to support community development through ACE. Critical to this responsibility is strengthening the capability of ACE communities – to contribute to leadership and democracy, to demonstrate financial responsibility, to build on their autonomy and to develop capacity for innovation and responsiveness.

strategic approaches summary

Support and develop ACE organisations and their committees of management

Build social and economic capital through ACE

Build strong financial and other management capacity within the ACE sector

Enhance skills and knowledge transfer though Victoria's Learning Towns

15

1

strategic approaches

Needs analysis
Develop capacity to identify, interpret and understand requisite community knowledge and build capacity to respond to community and learner needs

Social capital development
Support capacity for networking, bonding and bridging ties, reciprocity, social cohesion, knowledge and identity building in ACE communities

Diversity
Support and extend learning and delivery models designed to increase Koori participation, migrant community participation and participation of other critical target groups in ACFE programs

Leadership
Support and grow local community leadership including expertise to develop a strategic approach to partnerships through participation in Learning Towns, ACE Clusters and Local Learning and Employment Networks

Localisation
Develop and maintain the community base of ACE and optimise its edge in the context of localisation of education and the renewed commitment to local area responsibility for educational outcomes

Accountability
Investigate opportunities to streamline reporting while preserving the balance between accountability and the diversity, strength and independence of individual providers

Democracy and citizenship
Promote and support ACE's role in fostering democracy and citizenship

Professional development
Strengthen professional development and leadership support for committees of management

Volunteers
Support, value and develop volunteer resources

Learner centred community delivery
Maintain quality teaching and learning at the heart of ACE community building

related themes

Globalisation, Educational Values, Localisation and Learning Partnerships

purpose

Responsible, planned application of public funds to develop ACE learning infrastructure and achieve quality learning outcomes is a core responsibility of the ACFE Board. ACFE Board resources support learners and teachers, communities, structures, products, networks and learning partnerships. The Board will work to maintain, diversify and optimise the utility of ACE resources and infrastructure.

strategic approaches summary

Maintain, develop and diversify the resource base available to support ACE learners, teachers, providers and administrators

Develop and support information technology and new learning technologies infrastructure in ACE

Improve ACE provider skills in guidance, counselling and support

Support the professional development of teachers in the ACE sector

Promote and support generation of learner centred further education curriculum

Maintain and strengthen the capacity of ACE to meet the educational needs of disadvantaged learners through a learner centred approach

build ACE resources and learning infrastructure

2

strategic approaches

Resources
Build and diversify the resource base available to ACE and ACFE and examine funding models with a view to diversification of funding sources

Local pathways
Strengthen local pathways and develop ACE Clusters as critical components in the development of effective learning infrastructure

Information technology and new learning technologies
Resource support for technology in ACE and develop new, innovative models of application of technology

Administrative support
Streamline administrative constraints to effectiveness through professional development and system enhancements

Communication infrastructure
Link providers through effective, networked communication infrastructure

Continuous improvement
Examine, develop and continuously improve capability of the Board, Councils and Division to deliver policy leadership

Teacher professional development
Strengthen professional development for teachers, including in guidance, counselling and support

Curriculum development
Maintain and foster further education curriculum, maintain the centrality of curriculum in effective learning, and innovate and develop enhanced resources – new curriculum products to respond to new and future requirements. Ensure coherent curriculum concepts, products and practices meet the broad range of learning needs, from young to old

Maintain quality
Support applied quality assurance approaches to delivery

related themes

Globalisation, Educational Values, Enterprising Education, Localisation, Learning Partnerships, Knowledge Economy and Imaginative Learning

strengthen strategic relationships within and beyond ACE

purpose

Two partnerships are at the core of ACE activity: the partnership between the community and Government on which the ACFE Board is founded and the partnership between learners and teachers. Many other strategic relationships within and beyond the sector are also critical to the vigorous development of ACE and the realisation of the Board's vision. The Board will work to foster and invigorate the core relationships within and beyond the sector: between learner and teacher; between ACE providers; and between ACE and other sectors.

strategic approaches summary

Develop powerful, constructive and complementary relationships within groups who represent ACE interests – the Learning and Employment Skills Commission, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority and the Victorian Qualifications Authority

Assist ACE providers to work cooperatively and effectively with other ACE providers, other education providers, government agencies and providers of related human services through ongoing development of ACE Clusters, Learning Towns, and other structures and through participation in Local Learning and Employment Networks

Maintain and strengthen the relationships which lie at the heart of ACE – between community and government and between learners and educators.

3

strategic approaches

Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways Review
Position ACE appropriately in the context of post compulsory education and training accreditation, administrative, curriculum and qualification structures, at statewide and regional levels including through ACE participation in Local Learning and Employment Networks

Cross-sectoral relationships
Work with other educational and community sectors to deepen understanding of ACE and its complementary roles and relationships, and to extend pathways for learners wishing to move within and beyond ACE

Regional structures
Work with Regional Councils to identify how best to position regional structures to support local and autonomous provision

Community
Work with Regional Councils and providers to ensure Government policy as it applies to ACE is informed by and responsive to learners, teachers and providers in ACE and that planning and resourcing structures are effective at the local, community level

Learners
Continue to design educational outcomes and programs in partnership with learners and in response to learner needs

Adult Education Institutes
Cultivate and support coordinated partnerships between AEIs, the Board and local providers

Strategic planning
Develop considered strategic approaches that embrace ACE communities, particular markets and areas of policy development which reflect ACE core values and the ACFE Board vision and mission

Balance
Balance competing demands of various community and learner cohorts and understand and optimise ACE market niches.

related themes

Learning Partnerships, Enterprising Education, Localisation and Educational Values

purpose

Through development of a research culture and the high quality of performance of ACE organisations over time, ACE aims to achieve a broader recognition of its role, values and contribution. The Board has a major responsibility to further consolidate the knowledge base of ACE's educational, social and economic contribution and connections between ACE values and the sector's success. The Board will use this intelligence to build the ACE profile and further embed the core values of ACE in the post compulsory education and training system.

strategic approaches summary

Support ongoing development of a research and evaluation culture in ACE

Clarify and promote ACE's educational role relative to other education sectors

Demonstrate the value added to the community and to the economy by ACE and its contribution to broader government policy objectives

4 build knowledge and promote recognition of ACE

strategic approaches

Research and needs analysis
Consolidate information and generate new knowledge about the ACE sector and maintain and extend the research culture of ACE. Research the local and international models which could contribute to further development of alternative ACE Clusters/Learning Towns and to new community education models

Evaluation
Undertake process and impact evaluation to support, further develop and demonstrate the value of ACE Clusters/Learning Towns and develop new and innovative community education models

Identity
Support more ACE organisations to identify and promote themselves as part of the broader ACE sector

Recognition
Build intelligence on, and recognition for: the value of curriculum; volunteer contribution; credentials; the importance of teachers in creating intellectual property; multiple intelligences and multiple learning approaches; emotional and ethical capital; and community as the source of ACE power

Promotion
Promote recognition of the ACE sector and its capacity to generate social capital while building economic capital and related diverse learning and community development outcomes

Marketing
Assist providers to market ACE's visible capacity, leadership role in the community and ability to meet specific learning and community needs at a local level

Explore markets
Explore niche markets, including employment skills enhancement for the already employed, including small business

Intellectual property
Secure recognition for intellectual property generated in ACE and share intellectual property to extend best practice within and beyond the sector

related themes

Localisation, Enterprising Education, Knowledge Economy and Educational Values

Glossary of Acronyms

ACE Adult and Community Education
ACFE Adult, Community and Further Education
ACFEB Adult, Community and Further Education Board
ACFED Adult, Community and Further Education Division
AEI Adult Education Institute (includes AMES and CAE)
ALBE Adult Literacy and Basic Education
AMES Adult Multicultural Education Services
CAE Centre for Adult Education
DEET Department of Education, Employment and Training
ESL English as a Second Language
IT Information Technology
LESC Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission
LLENs Local Learning and Employment Networks
NLT New Learning Technologies
TAFE Training and Further Education
VCAA Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
VCE Victorian Certificate of Education
VLESC Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission
VQA Victorian Qualifications Authority

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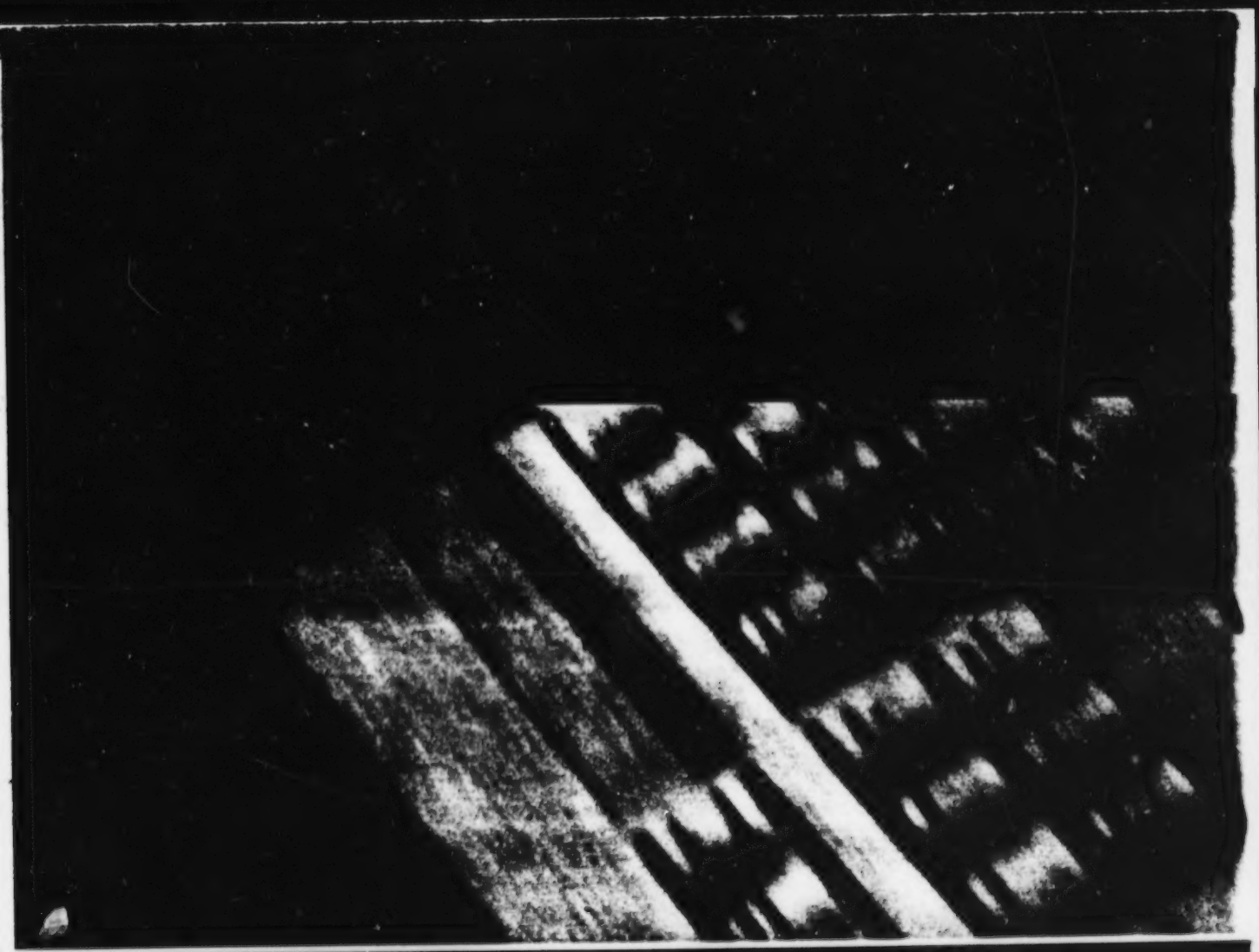

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